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He stated that he was a disciple of a guru named Buku. Together with other Santals he had emigrated eastwards. His old home being in Manbhum explains that some very few of his statements are different from what is the present custom in the Santal Parganas.

Kolean was a guru, a designation borrowed from the Hindus but adapted to suit Santal society. A Santal guru is a man who is supposed to know certain things, e. g., what should be recited at some ceremonial functions, and who is able to act as a reciter when called upon to do so. Any Santal can become a guru, by attaching himself to an older guru and gradually learning from him. In this way we cannot expect absolute uniformity throughout.

The use of such recitations may partly be due to imitation of Hindu customs, and there are definite statements in the traditional tales here translated to the effect that the ancestors on a certain occasion, after long deliberations, decided to abandon some customs of their own and to adopt Hindu usages instead. In this connexion it is of interest to note that the Santals often use songs in a foreign language, notably Bihari, during their festivals and at cremations. And it is a curious fact that many Santals do not understand these songs. It is evident that we have, to some extent, to do with borrowings, but it would be an exaggeration to maintain that the whole has been borrowed.

The traditional history of the world as contained in the first part of Kolean's narrative is recited twice in connexion with the life of every Santal, first at the caco chaṭiar, when a child is ceremoniously given full social right, and finally at the bhaṇḍan, the funeral ceremony, when the deceased is handed over to the next world and to the care of the departed ancestors.

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b. When a child is born out of wedlock.

In case a girl without being married gives birth to a child, her father and brothers inform the village headman and his deputy. These two call the village people together, and when they have gathered they ask the girl who is the father of the child. The village people then seize the man the girl names, and even if he denies responsibility, his word will not be accepted. 848

But if he is able to prove that other youngsters are also implicated, then the child is born in the bidhuṣ-state[5]. If only one person is proved to be responsible, he will have to take the girl and keep her as his wife; but if two or three persons are proved to be implicated, they will have to pay some money; then they shave off the hair of the child's head in the name of the Jǫg Mạńjhi (custos morum of the village), and the child gets his sept. Or if the Jǫg Mạńjhi is a relative, they will shave off the head-hair in the name of the Jǫg Paranik (the deputy custos morum) or of any man in the village. Of the money that the young men have paid, the child's mother will get some, to nurse the child until it gets strong; the man in whose name they shave off the head-hair gets some, and the village people get the rest of the money. If the child's mother is unable to name anyone as father, then also the child becomes a bidhuṣ, if the male relatives of the girl are unable to buy a man to stand as a husband for her. But if they are able to buy her a husband, the child will get this one's sept, and they shave off the head-hair of the child in his name. To buy a husband the male relatives of the girl will have to pay twenty rupees. This money the man who stands as husband gets. If they are unable to procure a husband, they will shave off the head-hair for the child as a bidhuṣ in the name of the village Jǫg Mạńjhi or his deputy, or of any man in the village, and the child will get this man's sept. At this time the male relatives of the child's mother will have to pay, and the man in whose name they shave off the child's head-hair will get the money. Formerly, before money was introduced, one pair of bullocks, one cow with calf (in milk) and one bundle of paddy had to be paid. This the man who stands as husband gets. [583]

If a Santal man has had illicit intercourse with a girl of another race, or a Santal girl with a man of another race, and a child is born, in this case we outcaste such ones for life, and such people will run away from among us. [563]

c. Caco chạṭiạr, the ceremony when a Santal is given full social rights.

There is no fixed time for the caco chạṭiạr[6], only that it must be performed before marriage, and children cannot be married unless they have gone through this ceremony. When a man has a number of children, he will have this act performed with 881

[5] The Santal word, bidhuṣ, is used about one who has no recognized father. [6] Caco is the Santal word for toddling, a child's first successful attempt to walk. As the name implies, the caco chạṭiạr may be performed with a child, as soon as it is able to move about. [192]

4 Oslo Etn. Mus. — Budding.

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[881] [776] [273] [302] [793] [603] [539]

them all at the same time. If a child should die before having been through this ceremony, they do not cremate such ones and do not carry their bones to the Damuda river.

A man wants to have the caco chaṭiar for his children; he brews beer and procures oil and turmeric to anoint the village people. Then he calls the village headman and his deputy and pours beer out to these two. They ask him: Look here, you, what beer is this that you are giving us? He says: This, father, is intimation-beer; I am minded to do so and so, that is to say, I am going to have caco chaṭiar for my children. This happens in the morning. After having drunk the beer the village headman and his deputy send the Godet to call the village people[7]. They come; when they are assembled, the village girls first anoint the village priest and his wife sitting on a mat; thereupon they anoint the field priest and his wife, after them the village headman and his wife, thereupon his deputy and this one's wife, the custos morum and wife, his deputy and wife, the messenger and wife, and finally they anoint all the (men and) women of the village. Now they serve beer round. First they give the village headman and his deputy, thereupon all the people. When one round has been served they ask the father of the children: For how many is this? He answers: For so and so many. Then so many children as are to have the caco chaṭiar, so many rounds of beer they serve, each round four leaf-cups to each. Then they ask the father of the children: How many iṛi and how many erba of yours have shot into ears[8]? He says: So many iṛi and so many erba have shot into ears. They say in reply: Very fortunate. Then they ask him: Whereabouts are the countries? The children's father then names the countries where the grandparents of the children live. Then they call for the namesake-beer. Now the grandparents of the children give the village people beer that they have brought with them from their homes. Thereupon the village people dance singing:

Along here, along in this direction are Nilgai tracks,
Along here, along in this direction are Nilgai hind tracks.

Track, track the Nilgai tracks,
Follow, follow the Nilgai hind tracks.

On the tank embankment are Nilgai tracks,
On the river bank are tracks of the Nilgai hind.

Tie on him (her), O mother, a golden bell,
Fasten on him (her) O mother, hollow sounding bells.

[192]

[7] Nowadays the Jog Maṛjhi is generally asked to call the people together; the people sit in rows on straw spread out for the purpose. [8] I. e., how many girls and how many sons have been born to you? iṛi is Panicum Crus-galli, L., fig. used about a girl; erba is Setaria italica, Kunth., fig. used about a boy.

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All then drink this beer.

Thereupon they commence the recitation. How the world was created, and how the Santals have from that time come, feeding like the silk-worm, to the different countries, all this they tell, in order that the children may not forget it. When enumerating this they reach the words "they were scattered here and there", they mention Hikim pargana, the first overchief in the Sikhar country; they say: Hikim pargana said to them: Come along, we shall settle down; I have spied out for us virgin forest, virgin soil. The ancestors said: Come along, let us help him; we shall clear jungle, burning and felling; we shall support ourselves and get a living. Having come together there they joined in marriages; they cleared the jungle, burning and felling; they kept the iṛi and erba seed hidden away in gourd-shells, big and small; what they had sown as iṛi grew up into erba ears; what they had sown as erba grew up into iṛi ears. What they had cleared by burning they would watch, the iṛi and erba ripened; now birds might eat it; then they said: Come, we shall keep watch. The fowls cluck, the lizards nod, and the birds also chirp. Consequently at this time two persons keep watch, husband and wife. They had cleared the jungle at the junction of roads, at the cross-road. They both keep watch; while keeping watch they climb a slanting dry pọpọrọ tree[9] and play; and by the grace of Ṭhạkur the broken grain, the husked grain was not spilled, was not scattered; it came well down from the dry pọpọrọ tree. And when it 'trod' the earth it became religiously, ceremoniously unclean.

On the day of the pestle, on the day of the mortar we are first; on the day of fire, on the day of flame we are first, at the dug hole with percolated water, at the pool water we are first; at the day of fetching firewood, at the day of fetching leaves we are first; those of you who would not go, these also we made go; let this especially be your grief. (The village people here answer: Those who are grieving have gone to Somae's narrow sloping valley[10], to the fine sand to be crocodile herds.) Now we humbly beseech you village people, from to-day, when we are having the cleansing at birth, the social initiation, we have run into debt, we borrowed at the Suṇḍi house, the Haḍi house[11]; then we provided, collected (the needful), and then we asked you, invited you to come. Consequently you came on your legs, we received you with our heads, as regards sitting and standing, as regards this also we overlooked and left it half-done: high seats, a high verandah, as regards this also we are lacking and in want. Now we beseech you, on the day of marriage, the day of wedlock, on the day of cleansing at birth, the day of social initiation, the day of dying, the day of death, we shall work and earn to squeeze out the beer, we shall work and earn to draw water, we shall work and earn to stitch the leaves

[9] Pọpọrọ (or more commonly pọpṛọ or pọpṛọ), Gardenia latifolia, Aiton. Here fig. about the wife.
[10] Somae sokṛa, acc. to tradition, a place near the sources of the Damuda river. [11] Suṇḍi is the beer-brewing Hindu low-caste; Haḍi the Hindu low-caste scavenger.

[137]
[823]
[564]

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881 539 together. We are imploring you, the village people, we were like crows, we have become white like paddybirds; you village people be witnesses.

Now they drink beer, and commencing to sing chaṭiar and dṛḍ songs they dance. Then all is finished.

Song.

O, the sirom ear had been formed.
Of the woman such and such a girl was born.

O, the marâr bush[12] had blossomed,
The boy so and so was born.

The plump one, the stout one,
The little parakeet, the little starling,
The sucking boy, the sucking so and so,
Bring the two down at once,
The little parakeet, the little starling.

c. Of the burnt-mark.

304 [775] The ancesters of old said that if any one did not get the burnt-mark, in the other world they would put in their arms a caterpillar big as a log; therefore all boys will diligently stand the pain. Some persons take only one burnt-mark, some three, some five, and some take seven burnt-marks. They get the burnt-mark on the left arm. The burnt-marks are made in the following way: They make a roll of a rag like a cigar. They set fire to this at the top end and put it down on the spot where the burnt-mark is to be. It burns slowly down. When it is burnt out the person who makes the mark quickly presses the ashes down on the spot. Then a blister forms and it becomes a sore. When this heals the burnt-mark is there.

d. Of tattooing.

[562] [775] Women do not take burnt-marks; they let themselves be tattooed, in order that in the other world they shall not put a caterpillar big as a log into their arms. They are tattooed on the breast. There are no special figures, only something indefinite, to look beautiful. First they draw with a bit of wood and soot-ink, and afterwards they prick with a needle along the pattern. When tattooing is done, they smear turmeric on, and they go and bathe.

[12] Erythrina Indica, Lam.

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stock, to the chief presiding deity, *Maraṅ Buru*, and ancestor-spirits of the family, uttering suitable incantations so that the baby may prosper in life and have no diseases.

The child, if a male one, now receives his name after his grand-father; and if a female, after her grand-mother on the paternal side. Now follows a general drink of rice-beer and a tribal dinner. The midwife, who generally receives a fee of eight annas if the child is a female one, and ten annas and a *baru* (brass-plate) if a male, will now, on her part, invoke *Maraṅ Buru* and the dead ancestors of the father of the child at the village bathing-ghat, throw the leaf-cup in water, bathe and return home.[1]

Between the third and the fourth year, children of both sexes have their ears bored by their grand-mothers or elderly female relatives by means of a brass-needle. It is a quiet domestic ceremony and no invitations are issued outside.

Caco-Chatiar

The second critical period in the life of the Santal is sought to be guarded by a purificatory ritual called Caco-chatiar. This ceremony may be observed any time before marriage and is in effect, the admission

1 The midwife's fee for the next male child is 8 ans. and 6 ans. for a female.

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881 783 of the male-child to all the privileges of the community life of the tribe. It is relevant to add [582] [764] that marriage is not permitted to any one who has not gone through the ceremony and should one die (without going through the ritual) his dead-body cannot be cremated nor are his bones thrown into the river, the most important step in a Santal funeral. It is, however, frequently seen that the father of several children performs the *Caco-chatiar* ceremony of all of them together.

As an initial step, *Jang hàṇḍia*, is prepared in the early morning. The villagers procure oil and [622] turmeric. The Headman and *Paranik* drink rice- [624] beer (*hàṇḍia*) and send for the villagers. The women [793] then rub oil and turmeric on the bodies of the *Naeke* (village-priest) and their assistants and this is done to all in a customary order of precedence from the village-officials down to the villagers. Rice-beer is served. The Santals dance and sing.

[538] Then comes the turn of an old man of the village, a *Guru*, the repository of Santal lores to recite the tribal story of the creation of the world and the wanderings of the Santal (already narrated in the 1st. Chapter, Santal Genesis and Migration) ancestors till they came to their present habitat.

It is then emphasised that all the impurities of the male-child have been purged away and by participating in the drinking bout of *hàṇḍia*, they

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have initiated him into the full rights and responsibilities of adult manhood. The ceremony concludes with the appeal to the *Monren hor*, "We were black like crows, now we are white as white paddy-birds, you five men are our witnesses" (Campbell).

Cicatrization (Sika)

The Santals have some marks looking like vaccination scars on their left-forearms, midway between the wrist and the elbow. These signs seen on the outer side of the forearm, contain an odd number of marks as one, three, five, or nine. It is customary for the male children to wear these *Sika* marks, and the ceremony is generally performed within their twelfth year.

For cicatrization, they use a rag rolled to a thickness of about an inch and a half and shaped like a candle. An odd number of spots on the forearm are then spat upon, and the improvised candle is then made to stand on the saliva, which slowly burns and scalds the skin. The hands of the boy, who rolls in agony, are caught hold of by two men till the process is finished. Thereafter, the wound is healed by the application of a moss called *Sealom* (a fresh water Alga, *Mongeotea immersa*, West).

If you question a Santal as to why they have an odd number of these marks, he will readily answer

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that the first sign means *Iìòn* (life) and the next *Mòròn* (death), the third *Iìòn* and the fourth *Mòròn* and so on. He does not, one can easily guess why, want to close with death. So he hits upon an odd number of *Sika* marks, which will ensure him "life". If this ceremony is not performed, the Santal believes that in his life hereafter, huge worms shaped like their giant drums (*tumdak'*)[1] will sit on his lap and eat him up. No particular religious ceremony, however, attends the *Sika*, which is confined to men only. The women generally wear tattoo marks on their palms, arms and some on their breasts.

Tattoo marks on women (or Khoda)

Santal women, in Mayurbhanj, generally wear several tattoo marks on wrists, near the end of their forearm and on the chest. As regards the nature of these marks, there is nothing special to the Santals to connect these with their traditional history, as has been traced concerning the Kharias. The characteristic common design was found to be that of the sun, amongst a variety of birds and other

1 Ref. Tumdak', a kind of drum. The body of the drum is of burnt clay, the end beaten by the left hand is of bullock's hide, and that beaten by the right hand is of goat's skin, the whole is laced with strips of bullock's hide. (page 676, Dr. Campbell's *Santali to English Dictionary*.)

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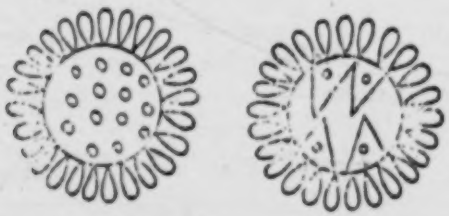
floral embroidery on the skin. This presumably refers to the Santal Supreme Deity, *Siñ Boṅga* (Sun-God). 304 881 [776]

These marks are usually applied to Santal girls between their tenth and eleventh year before their marriage ; cases of post-marriage tattooing also were mentioned by some. Custom requires that the ceremony of tattooing should be performed outside the house by a woman of the *Siklidar* tribe. Such a professional woman is called *Khudni* (she who punctures) in Mayurbhanj. She uses a three-pronged iron weapon to pierce the flesh and imprint the designs, and applies the juice of myrobalan as the dyeing stuff. Finally, the portion thus marked and dyed is washed with turmeric-paste diluted in water. [413] [386]



[531]

Tattoo marks on women.

In answer to our questions as to why they wear such marks, several women said, "These are our marks to be shown before *Bhògban* (God). What else will remain hereafter ?, (excepting these marks)". Nabin Mañjhi, an old Santal Headman explained

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304 that tattoo marks are not merely a body-decoration.
88 They are as much necessary to women, as cicatrization (or sika) to Santal men. Should a woman be
606 without her tattoo-signs, her mother-in-law will
775 refuse to accept her as a daughter of the house; and should such a woman die, before she was ceremonially given these marks, *Iòm Raja* (god of death) will take her to be impure and punish her in Hell. That the Santals consider tattooing as a social and religious necessity, and its omission an offence, cannot be contested in view of the wide prevalence of the custom through the length and breadth of the Santal areas.

105 *Conclusion*

In course of the preceding pages, we have noticed the "Rites de passage", the ceremonies and rituals attendant on child-birth, cicatrization of men and tattooing of women. The various formalities with which the new-born babe is ushered into the society have their own meaning. The society, that has an economic background, built up an elaborate clan-life, singularly homogeneous in its totality and component parts. It organised a social constitution for orderly existence and propagation of the species from biological instincts. So, when a new-comer is on the threshold of the tribe, steps are taken to protect him from unknown and supernatural dangers.

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with. Some gave the age for male children at 6 to 7 years, while others were variously disposed and placed the age at 8, 10 and 11 years. The approximate age given for female children also varied from 8 to 14 years. At this period, boys and girls display signs of restiveness and want to frequent the dances, specially "Lagre*n*", the moon-light mixed dance.

On attaining puberty, girls become very afraid of menstrual blood. But this dread has no particular superstition attached to it; it is merely the reaction of a mere girl to a strange physiological change in her system. An educated Santal told us that girls are asked to observe ceremonial uncleanliness for a period and required not to touch pitchers, nor are they allowed to enter places of worship. But this was not corroborated by others. This throws light on the influences of Hindu ideas and practices on the present-day Santals. Village-elders were definite that there is no ceremony whatsoever with puberty. While under menstruation, girls wear a *kupni* ("a narrow strip of cloth passing between the thighs, and stuck into a waist-string before and behind, to conceal the privy parts" – Dr. Campbell), but after three or four days, they cease wearing it. They can touch anything and no peculiar dress or sign is worn by girls to signify that they have attained puberty. The weight of evidence at our disposal

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882 goes to show that girls now lose considerable freedom
881 of movement. They are watched by their parents with care and are given companions while going to jungles to gather wood or to the *hats* for marketing. In support of the proposition that young girls are haunted by wakeful eyes, the following song may [538] be usefully quoted here:—A girl sings:
[539]

Kidiñ tundañ lekayom horasien
Baha barge yoiñ bòlò lendò;
Hiliñ geto yoiñ eger kidiñ
Mone baric' yoiñ bòlò lendò.

(Translated)

(To look) Like a scorpion, I parted my hair;
I entered the flower-garden.
My sister-in-law rebuked me,
My mind became sorrowful, as my sister-in-law rebuked me.

864 As regards the age in which boys and girls receive their first sexual experience, the opinion of the Santals questioned on the point varied. Some put it at 14/15 years with boys who attain puberty, while for girls they gave the age at 12/13 "when the breasts ripen," as they put it. Others, put it at 16/17 with males and 13/14 with females. Two educated Santals questioned at different places stated that boys and girls receive their first experience at 10/12 and 9/10 years respectively.

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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with which the leaves of Nim tree (Melia azadirachta, L) have been mixed. After this they all take a draught of their home-brewed liquor and depart.

On the fifth day the child is given its name. Should it happen to be a son and heir he takes the name of his grandfather; should he be the second son born, he takes the name of his maternal grandfather: and thus the paternal grandfather's brother for the third boy, the maternal grandfather's brother for the fourth boy and so on. The same procedure is followed for girls, the feminine relations being in the same order from the female side.

Chacho Chhatiar: It is a very important ceremony of the Santals, which enables the individual to take his place in Santal society and participate in its rights, rules and ceremonies. Without this no Santal can be married or cremated; if anybody dies without this ceremony he is buried. There is no age limit for this ceremony though it must precede marriage. Generally the Santal performs this ceremony for several children at the same time.

Mr. O'Malley has given a full description of this ceremony in the District Gazetteer[1] in the following words. "The father brews handi and provides oil and turmeric for the villagers. When the handi is ready he calls the manjhi and paranik in the morning and gives them a drink. They ask him what handi it is, and, after drinking, the headman bids the godet call the villagers together. When they have come the girls of the village anoint the naeke and his wife, who sit

[1] L.S.S.O'Malley—Bengal District Gazetters (Santal Parganas) pp. 132-133.

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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881
852 on a mat, with oil and turmeric; next the kudam naeke and his wife, then the manjhi and his wife and all the officials in the same order as at the janam chhatiar: last of all, all the women are anointed. The handi is now served in leaf cups to the manjhi and paranik and then to the other people; after which all are ready for further proceedings. They ask how many children the handi is for, and for each child four small leaf cups are given to all those present. Then they ask the father: "How many iri (Panicum crus-yalli) and how many ebra (Setaria Italica) ears have ripened for you?" This is a figurative expression for "How many boys and girls have you?" On receiving an answer they ask again, "Where is the land?" The father tells them where the namesakes of the children live, whereupon they call for "namesake handi", i.e., beer which the namesakes present have brought with them. The people then sing a special song and dance and drink.

881
852 A guru, who in a way officiates for the father of the family, now starts the binti, i.e., a mythical
539 historical recitation. He begins with the creation of the earth and relates the Santal history of mankind,
[792] their wanderings, etc., according to tradition, and recounts how their ancestors spread abroad, some of them coming to Sikhar, where the first pargana was Hikim, who said to the people: "Let us settle here; we have found primeval forest and virgin soil". The ancestors said, "Let us help him; we will burn and clear jungle, we will live and prosper". Then they came to their present abode and married, cleared jungle and multiplied. Thereupon the guru on behalf of the family enters into a colloquy with the people, in which

4: Biswas D, F-3; 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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inter alia he says, "We implore you to let us be with you to brew and drink beer, to fetch water, to pin leaves together on the day of marriage, the day of chhatiar, the day of cremation. We were like crows, we have become white like paddy birds. You, villagers, be our witnesses". This ends the formal part of the proceedings.

The festival is concluded by further drinking and singing of chhatiar and other songs. It will be seen that there is no special or formal act done by the village people. They are invited for the occasion; the father (or his representative) implores the community to recognize the young ones as participators at the three great social occasions, and the people acknowledge this by drinking handi, the Santal mode of ratification. There is no kind of sacrifice at either janam or chacho chhatiar".

Adoption: Among the Santals to adopt a child is of rare occurrence. Dr. Campbell says they do not practise adoption. Rev. P.O. Bodding is of the opinion that adoption is present among the Santals. I have also heard of one or two instances of adoption in the Damin area of the Santhal Parganas.

If a man takes a second wife and this woman has a boy by a former husband, the man may adopt this boy. He proceeds in the following way: He first informs the village headman, then calls the nearest male relatives of the boy whose consent is necessary. If they agree they say so in the presence of the headman and the villagers of the village where the man, who will adopt the boy, lives. Then the male relatives